

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Maine's Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach Plan 2012-2013

The following notice inviting public comments on the state's Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach Plan was posted at the following website on August 14, 2012:

<http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Labor+Press+Releases&id=426123&v=MJCArticle>

The notice read as follows:

Input Sought on Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach Plan for 2012-2013

August 14, 2012

Augusta – The Bureau of Employment Services, Department of Labor, invites you to comment on the Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach Plan for 2012-2013. NOTICE: Review and public comments on the plan will be received from August 14, 2012 to September 13, 2012. Comments should be sent to Juan Perez-Febles, State Monitor Advocate, Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services, 55 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 04333-0055. Interested Parties may also send their comments to Mr. Perez-Febles at: Juan.A.Perez-Febles@maine.gov

From: Wendy Lord
Sent: Tuesday, August 28, 2012 10:55 AM
To: Klein, David
Cc: Christopher Huh; juan.a.perez@maine.gov; Wendy Lord
Subject: potato workers in maine

According to Tim Hobbs from the Maine Potato Board there are definitely 3000 seasonal potato workers, probably closer to 4,000-5000.

This count came from the fact that there are 250 potato growers who need 8 workers for each harvester, (most have 2) plus help in the potato house. These are all seasonal, hired for harvest.

Wendy

Wendy Lord, Career Advisor
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From: Barbara Ginley [mailto:bginley@mainemigrant.org]
Sent: Thursday, August 23, 2012 6:52 PM
To: Perez-Febles, Juan A.
Subject: Wagner-Peyser Outreach Plan

Dear Juan- I have taken some time to review the outreach plan that has been posted for public comment. As one of the agencies that works closely with you as our state monitor advocate I have the following suggestions;

1. Much of the plan seems to detail the work you do in terms of outreach via the Rakers Center, Career Centers- FJProgram, etc. One topic that has come up at the MSFW Health Council and has been reiterated by smaller growers that MMHP has contact with, is the inability to connect to workers. I certainly recognize that the Career Centers are there to serve this very purpose. Yet, agricultural employers are not comfortable in putting those listings up through a state entity/agency. I think it would be worthwhile, perhaps through a needs assessment to determine who would a grower trust and/or prefer to go to for employment connections? That information could inform how future services are structured and/or identify outside entities that could play a role in promoting jobs in agriculture.

2. As it relates to employers, I also see significant need for some targeted education on why it is important for an employer to conduct due diligence when engaging a labor contractor. My recollection is that there are already national resources that exist in this area that could be used, referenced, promoted. Ultimately it would be great if there was a national database that employers or folks serving FWs could check to see if a labor contractor is in good-standing, under investigation, etc. Again, I think it could be fairly seamless to integrate such information into outreach to employers in Maine.

Many thanks for inviting us to review and reflect on the proposed plan, we are appreciative of all that MEDOL does on behalf of our state's farmworkers.

Best-
Barbara Ginley

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From: Christopher Huh [mailto:CHuh@emdc.org]
Sent: Tuesday, August 28, 2012 12:07 PM
To: Perez-Febles, Juan A.
Subject: FW: response to Juan @ Agricultural plan

I too have read the proposed 2012 Ag plan and do not have questions. Thank you.

Chris

From: Wendy Lord
Sent: Tuesday, August 28, 2012 11:07 AM
To: Christopher Huh
Subject: response to Juan @ Agricultural plan

I have read the 2012 Agricultural plan, and discussed the numbers with Juan Perez-Febles.

Wendy

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